

**Notes:** The first chart (next page) identifies the MDCD-approved assessments by learner goal and explains how GED and high school diploma students may be assigned a NRS educational functioning level (EFL) without use of standard assessment tests. The effective date of MDCD-approved assessments is July 1, 2001, with the following exception: Any new enrollee as of January 1, 2001, with an employment-related goal must be assessed using CASAS, or Slosson, at the three lowest EFL levels, and Work Keys at the three highest EFL levels. This chart also may be very useful to providers not using MDCD-approved assessments during the “assessment test transition” period. It presents *grade-level equivalents* for the NRS educational functioning levels for adult basic education, which may be used as a guide to determine where students belong on the educational functioning level (EFL), or pre- and post-test, scale when specific test literature for assessments not MDCD-approved is not available.

The second chart – “Outcome Measures Definitions”- on pages 3-7 relates scores for department-approved assessments to the NRS “educational functioning levels” for adult basic education and English-as-a-second language. Pre-tests (“level at entry”) and post-tests (“level at completion”) place students on the educational functioning level scale at the start of instruction and at the end of instruction, respectively. Any movement up this NRS scale is an educational gain. The category of “educational gain” is the primary performance measure for adult education because it applies to all learners. Other key, or “core,” outcome measures depend on the goal of the learner. In other words, the “educational gains” measure is the only one that provides an overall performance gauge for adult education. For a thorough understanding of the NRS, access the “NRS guidelines” at <http://www.air-DC.org/NRS>.

This update clarifies where Work Keys falls on the educational functioning level scale, adds the Slosson assessment for work-related goals at the three lowest educational functioning levels, includes the “actual” GED test on the “EFL” scale, and corrects the score-level relationship for the BESTEL on the ESL scale.

MDCD-Approved Assessments by Learner Goal					
NRS Reporting for Educational Functioning Levels and Educational Gains					
Educational Functioning Levels		Non-Work Goal		Work-Related Goal	
		ABE Levels			
Beginning ABE Literacy	(Grades 0 – 1.9)	Slosson (lowest 3 levels)	ABLE AMES CASAS (Employability) TABE & Work Keys (where on scale)	CASAS (Employability)/Slosson (lowest 3 levels)	
Beginning Basic Education	(Grades 2 – 3.9)				
Low Intermediate Basic Education	(Grades 4 – 5.9)				
High Intermediate Basic Education	(Grades 6 – 8.9)			Work Keys	
Low Adult Secondary Education (GED and HS Diploma)	(Grades 9 – 10.9)	GED tests or high school diploma credits			
High Adult Secondary Education (GED and HS Diploma) <sup>1</sup>	(Grades 11 – 12)				
		ESL Levels			
Beginning ESL Literacy		BEST-Oral/Written CASAS (Life Skills)		CASAS (Life Skills)	
Beginning ESL					
Low Intermediate ESL					
High Intermediate ESL					
Low Advanced ESL			BESTEL		
High Advanced ESL					

### GED and High School Diploma Programs

**The GED Program:** GED students are placed on the scale based on the number of tests passed (the number of tests out of 5). Passage of 1-2 test places the learner at the Low Adult Secondary Education level. Passing at least three tests relates to the High Adult Secondary Education level. Passing all five tests qualifies the student for the GED certificate and, thus, the student completes the level.

**The High School Diploma Program:** Students are assigned an “educational functioning level” at entry based on the percentage of credits required for a diploma. The number of credits earned is placed over the total needed for a diploma and the resulting percentage provides a grade level scale (e.g., credits now/credits needed = %). This scale corresponds to the NRS framework and gains would be measured as students earn sufficient credits to move up the scale or earn a diploma. Earning a diploma “completes” the level.

<b>Low Adult Secondary Education</b>	Up to 24.9% - Grade 9
	Up to 49.9% - Grade 10
<b>High Adult Secondary Education</b>	Up to 74.9% - Grade 11
	Up to 99.9% - Grade 12

Note: There may be instances where GED and HS diploma students are enrolled and they fall below the above scales (e.g., no GED tests passed and no credits toward diploma). In such cases, the students would be placed at the next lowest educational functioning level, or High Intermediate Basic Education.

<sup>1</sup> Passing all five tests for the GED (qualifying for a certificate), or earning a diploma, as relevant, “completes” this level.

## Outcome Measures Definitions Chart

Literacy Level	Basic Reading and Writing	Numeracy Skills	Functional and Workplace Skills
<b>Beginning ABE Literacy</b> Test Benchmark: TABE (5-6) scale scores (grade level 0-1.9): Total reading 529 and below Total math 540 and below Total language 599 and below TABE (7-8) scale scores (grade level 0-1.9): Reading 367 and below Total Math 313 and below Language 391 and below CASAS (Employability): 200 and below AMES (B, ABE) scale scores (grade level 0-1.9): Reading: 500 and below Total Math: 476 and below Communication: 496 and below ABE scale scores (grade level 0-1.9): Reading 523 and below Math 521 and below SLOSSON-Sort R scale scores (grade level 0-1.9): Raw Score: 1-53	Individual has no or minimal reading and writing skills. May have little or no comprehension of how print corresponds to spoken language and may have difficulty using a writing instrument. At the upper range of this level, individual can recognize, read and write letters and numbers, but has a limited understanding of connected prose and may need frequent re-reading. Can write a limited number of basic sight words and familiar words and phrases; may also be able to write simple sentences or phrases, including very simple messages. Can write basic personal information. Narrative writing is disorganized and unclear; inconsistently uses simple punctuation (e.g., periods, commas, question marks); contains frequent errors in spelling.	Individual has little or no recognition of numbers or simple counting skills or may have only minimal skills, such as the ability to add or subtract single digit numbers.	Individual has little or no ability to read basic signs or maps, can provide limited personal information on simple forms. The individual can handle routine entry level jobs that require little or no basic written communication or computational skills and no knowledge of computers or other technology.
<b>Beginning Basic Education</b> Test Benchmark: TABE (5-6) scale scores (grade level 2-3.9): Total reading 530-679 Total math 541-677 Total language 600-677 TABE (7-8): scale scores (grade level 2-3.9): Reading: 368-460 Total Math: 314-441 Language: 392-490 CASAS (Employability): 201-210 AMES (B, ABE) scale scores (grade level 2-3.9): Reading: 503-510 Total Math: 477-492 Communication: 498-506 ABE scale scores (grade level 2-3.9): Reading: 525-612 Math: 530-591 SLOSSON-Sort R scale scores (grade level 2-3.9): Raw Score: 54-105	Individual can read simple material on familiar subjects and comprehend simple and compound sentences in single or linked paragraphs containing a familiar vocabulary; can write simple notes and messages on familiar situations, but lacks clarity and focus. Sentence structure lacks variety, but shows some control of basic grammar (e.g., present and past tense), and consistent use of punctuation (e.g., periods, capitalization).	Individual can count, add and subtract three digit numbers, can perform multiplication through 12; can identify simple fractions and perform other simple arithmetic operations.	Individual is able to read simple directions, signs and maps, fill out simple forms requiring basic personal information, write phone messages and make simple change. There is minimal knowledge of, and experience with, using computers and related technology. The individual can handle basic entry level jobs that require minimal literacy skills; can recognize very short, explicit, pictorial texts, e.g. understands logos related to worker safety before using a piece of machinery; can read want ads and complete simple job applications.

Outcome Measures Definitions Chart			
Literacy Level	Basic Reading and Writing	Numeracy Skills	Functional and Workplace Skills
<b>Low Intermediate Basic Education</b> Test benchmark: TABE (5-6) scale scores (grade level 4-5.9): Total reading: 680-722 Total math: 678-729 Total language: 678-705 TABE (7-8) scale scores (grade level 4-5.9): Reading: 461-517 Total Math: 442-505 Language: 491-523 CASAS (Employability): 211-220 AMES (B and C, ABE) scale scores (grade level 4-5.9): Reading (B): 511-609 Reading (C): 514-521 Total Math (B): 494-603 Total Math (C): 493-508 Communication (B): 508-605, (C) 509-513 ABLE scale scores (grade level 4-5.9): Reading: 613-644 Math: 593-641 SLOSSON-Sort R scale scores (grade level 4-5.9): Raw Score: 106-139	Individual can read text on familiar subjects that have a simple and clear underlying structure (e.g., clear main idea, chronological order); can use context to determine meaning; can interpret actions required in specific written directions, can write simple paragraphs with main idea and supporting detail on familiar topics (e.g., daily activities, personal issues) by recombining learned vocabulary and structures; can self and peer edit for spelling and punctuation errors.	Individual can perform with high accuracy all four basic math operations using whole numbers up to three digits; can identify and use all basic mathematical symbols.	Individual is able to handle basic reading, writing and computational tasks related to life roles, such as completing medical forms, order forms or job applications; can read simple charts, graphs labels and payroll stubs and simple authentic material if familiar with the topic. The individual can use simple computer programs and perform a sequence of routine tasks given direction using technology (e.g., fax machine, computer operation). The individual can qualify for entry level jobs that require following basic written instructions and diagrams with assistance, such as oral clarification; can write a short report or message to fellow workers; can read simple dials and scales and take routine measurements.
<b>High Intermediate Basic Education</b> Test benchmark: TABE (5-6) scale scores (grade level 6-8.9): Total reading: 723-761 Total math: 730-776 Total language: 706-730 TABE (7-8) scale scores (grade level 6-8.9): Reading: 518-566 Total Math: 506-565, Language: 524-559 CASAS (Employability): 221-235 AMES (C and D, ABE) scale scores (grade level 6-8.9): Reading (C): 525-612, Reading (D): 522-543 Total Math (C): 510-627, Total Math (D): 509-532 Communication (C): 516-611 Communication (D): 516-523 ABLE scale score (grade level 6-8.9): Reading: 646-680 Math: 643-693 Work Keys scale scores: Reading for Information: 3, Locating Information: 4 Writing: 2, Applied Mathematics: 4	Individual is able to read simple descriptions and narratives on familiar subjects or from which new vocabulary can be determined by context; can make some minimal inferences about familiar texts and compare and contrast information from such texts, but not consistently. The individual can write simple narrative descriptions and short essays on familiar topics; has consistent use of basic punctuation, but makes grammatical errors with complex structures.	Individual can perform all four basic math operations with whole numbers and fractions; can determine correct math operations for solving narrative math problems and can convert fractions to decimals and decimals to fractions; can perform basic operations on fractions.	Individual is able to handle basic life skills tasks such as graphs, charts and labels, and can follow multi-step diagrams; can read authentic materials on familiar topics, such as simple employee handbooks and payroll stubs; can complete forms such as a job application and reconcile a bank statement. Can handle jobs that involves following simple written instructions and diagrams; can read procedural texts, where the information is supported by diagrams, to remedy a problem, such as locating a problem with a machine or carrying out repairs using a repair manual. The individual can learn or work with most basic computer software, such as using a word processor to produce own texts; can follow simple instructions for using technology.

Outcome Measures Definitions Chart			
Literacy Level	Basic Reading and Writing	Numeracy Skills	Functional and Workplace Skills
<b>Low Adult Secondary Education</b> Test benchmark: TABE (5-6) scale scores (grade level 9-10.9): Total reading: 762-775 Total math: 777-789 Total language 731-743 TABE (7-8): scale scores (grade level 9-10.9): Reading: 567-595 Total Math: 566-594 Language: 560-585 CASAS (Employability): 236-245 AMES (E, ABE) scale scores (grade level 9-10.9): Reading: 544-561 Total Math: 534-548 Communication: 527-535 ABLE scale scores (grade level 9-10.9): Reading: 682-697 Math: 694-716 Work Keys scale scores: Reading for Information: 4 Locating Information: 5 Writing: 3 Applied Mathematics: 5 High School Diploma: less than 50% of the total credits required for diploma GED: Pass at least one actual or practice test out of the five tests	Individual can comprehend expository writing and identify spelling, punctuation and grammatical errors; can comprehend a variety of materials such as periodicals and non-technical journals on common topics; can comprehend library reference materials and compose multi-paragraph essays; can listen to oral instructions and write an accurate synthesis of them; can identify the main idea in reading selections and use a variety of context issues to determine meaning. Writing is organized and cohesive with few mechanical errors; can write using a complex sentence structure; can write personal notes and letters that accurately reflect thoughts.	Individual can perform all basic math functions with whole numbers, decimals and fractions; can interpret and solve simple algebraic equations, tables and graphs and can develop own tables and graphs; can use math in business transactions.	Individual is able or can learn to follow simple multi-step directions, and read common legal forms and manuals; can integrate information from texts, charts and graphs; can create and use tables and graphs; can complete forms and applications and complete resumes; can perform jobs that require interpreting information from various sources and writing or explaining tasks to other workers; is proficient using computers and can use most common computer applications; can understand the impact of using different technologies; can interpret the appropriate use of new software and technology.
<b>High Adult Secondary Education</b> Test benchmark: TABE (5-6) scale scores (grade level 11-12.9): Total reading: 776 and above Total math: 790 and above Total language: 744 and above TABE (7-8): scale scores (grade level 11-12): Reading: 596 and above Total Math: 595 and above Language: 586 and above CASAS (Employability): 246 and higher AMES (E, ABE) scale scores (grade level 11-12): Reading: 565 and above Total Math: 551 and above Communication: 538 and above ABLE scale scores (grade level 11-12): Reading: 699 and above Math: 717 and above Work Keys scale scores: Reading for Information: 5, Locating Information: 6, Writing: 4, Applied Mathematics: 6 HS Diploma: 50-99.9% of the total credits required for a diploma GED: Pass at least three actual or practice tests out of the five tests	Individual can comprehend, explain and analyze information from a variety of literacy works, including primary source materials and Professional journals; can use context cues and higher order processes to interpret meaning of written material. Writing is cohesive with clearly expressed ideas supported by relevant detail; can use varied and complex sentence structures with few mechanical errors.	Individual can make mathematical estimates of time and space and can apply principles of geometry to measure angles, lines and surfaces; can also apply trigonometric functions.	Individuals are able to read technical information and complex manuals; can comprehend some college level books and apprenticeship manuals; can function in most job situations involving higher order thinking; can read text and explain a procedure about a complex and unfamiliar work procedure, such as operating a complex piece of machinery; can evaluate new work situations and processes, can work productively and collaboratively in groups and serve as facilitator and reporter of group work. The individual is able to use common software and learn new software applications; can define the purpose of new technology and software and select appropriate technology; can adapt use of software or technology to new situations and can instruct others, in written or oral form on software and technology use.

## Outcome Measures Definitions Chart

Literacy Level	Basic Reading and Writing	Numeracy Skills	Functional and Workplace Skills
<b>Beginning ESL Literacy</b> Test benchmark: CASAS (Life Skills): 180 and below Oral BEST: 0-15 Literacy BEST: 0-7	Individual cannot speak or understand English, or understands only isolated words or phrases.	Individual has no or minimal reading or writing skills in any language. May have little or no comprehension of how print corresponds to spoken language and may have difficulty using a writing instrument.	Individual functions minimally or not at all in English and can communicate only through gestures or a few isolated words, such as name and other personal information; may recognize only common signs or symbols (e.g., stop sign, product logos); can handle only very routine entry-level jobs that do not require oral or written communication in English. There is no knowledge or use of computers or technology.
<b>Beginning ESL</b> Test benchmark: CASAS (Life Skills): 181-200 Oral BEST 16-41 Literacy BEST: 8-46	Individual can understand frequently used words in context and very simple phrases spoken slowly and with some repetition; there is little communicative output and only in the most routine situations; little or no control over basic grammar; survival needs can be communicated simply, and there is some understanding of simple questions.	Individual can recognize, read and write numbers and letters, but has a limited understanding of connected prose and may need frequent re-reading; can write a limited number of basic sight words and familiar words and phrases; may also be able to write simple sentences or phrases, including very simple messages. Can write basic personal information. Narrative writing is disorganized and unclear; inconsistently uses simple punctuation (e.g., periods, commas, question marks); contains frequent errors in spelling.	Individual functions with difficulty in situations related to immediate needs and in limited social situations; has some simple oral communication abilities using simple learned and repeated phrases; may need frequent repetition; can provide personal information on simple forms; can recognize common forms of print found in the home and environment, such as labels and product names; can handle routine entry level jobs that require only the most basic written or oral English communication and in which job tasks can be demonstrated. There is minimal knowledge or experience using computers or technology.
<b>Low Intermediate ESL</b> Test benchmark: CASAS (Life Skills): 201-210 Oral BEST: 42-50 Literacy BEST: 47-53	Individual can understand simple learned phrases and limited new phrases containing familiar vocabulary spoken slowly with frequent repetition; can ask and respond to questions using such phrases; can express basic survival needs and participate in some routine social conversations, although with some difficulty; has some control of basic grammar.	Individual can read simple material on familiar subjects and comprehend simple and compound sentences in single or linked paragraphs containing a familiar vocabulary; can write simple notes and messages on familiar situations, but lacks clarity and focus. Sentence structure lacks variety, but shows some control of basic grammar (e.g., present and past tense), and consistent use of punctuation (e.g., periods, capitalization).	Individual can interpret simple directions and schedules, signs and maps; can fill out simple forms, but needs support on some documents that are not simplified; can handle routine entry level jobs that involve some written or oral English communication, but in which job tasks can be demonstrated. Individual can use simple computer programs and can perform a sequence of routine tasks given directions using technology (e.g., fax machine, computer).

Outcome Measures Definitions Chart			
Literacy Level	Basic Reading and Writing	Numeracy Skills	Functional and Workplace Skills
<b>High Intermediate ESL</b> Test benchmark: CASAS (Life Skills): 211-220 Oral BEST: 51-57 Literacy BEST: 54-65 BESTEL: 40-48 or 53-64%	Individual can understand learned phrases and short new phrases containing familiar vocabulary spoken slowly and with some repetition; can communicate basic survival needs with some help; can participate in conversation in limited social situations and use new phrases with hesitation; relies on description and concrete terms. There is inconsistent control of more complex grammar.	Individual can read text on familiar subjects that have a simple and clear underlying structure (e.g., clear main idea, chronological order); can use context to determine meaning; can interpret actions required in specific written directions, can write simple paragraphs with main idea and supporting detail on familiar topics (e.g., daily activities, personal issues) by recombining learned vocabulary and structures; can self and peer edit for spelling and punctuation errors.	Individual can meet basic survival and social needs, can follow some simple oral and written instruction and has some ability to communicate on the telephone on familiar subjects; can write messages and notes related to basic needs; complete basic medical forms and job applications; can handle jobs that involve basic oral instructions and written communication in tasks that can be clarified orally. The individual can work with or learn basic computer software, such as word processing; can follow simple instructions for using technology.
<b>Low Advanced ESL</b> Test benchmark: CASAS (Life Skills): 221-235 Oral BEST 58-64 Literacy BEST: 66 and above BESTEL: 49-57 or 66-76%	Individual can converse on many everyday subjects and some subjects with unfamiliar vocabulary, but may need repetition, rewording or slower speech; can speak creatively, but with hesitation; can clarify general meaning by rewording and has control of basic grammar; understands descriptive and spoken narrative and can comprehend abstract concepts in familiar contexts.	Individual is able to read simple descriptions and narratives on familiar subjects or from which new vocabulary can be determined by context; can make some minimal inferences about familiar texts and compare and contrast information from such texts, but not consistently. The individual can write simple narrative descriptions and short essays on familiar topics, such as customs in native country; has consistent use of basic punctuation, but makes grammatical errors with complex structures.	Individual can function independently to meet most survival needs and can communicate on the telephone on familiar topics; can interpret simple charts and graphics; can handle jobs that require simple oral and written instructions, multi-step diagrams and limited public interaction. The individual can use all basic software applications, understand the impact of technology and select the correct technology in a new situation.
<b>High Advanced ESL</b> Test benchmark: CASAS (Life Skills): 236-245 Oral BEST 65 and above BESTEL: 58-66 or 77-88% (or higher levels)	Individual can understand and participate effectively in face-to-face conversations on everyday subjects spoken at normal speed; can converse and understand independently in survival, work and social situations; can expand on basic ideas in conversation, but with some hesitation; can clarify general meaning and control basic grammar, although still lacks total control over complex structures.	Individual can read authentic materials on everyday subjects and can handle most reading related to life roles; can consistently and fully interpret descriptive narratives on familiar topics and gain meaning from unfamiliar topics; uses increased control of language and meaning-making strategies to gain meaning of unfamiliar texts. The individual can write multiparagraph essays with a clear introduction and development of ideas; writing contains well formed sentences, appropriate mechanics and spelling, and few grammatical errors.	Individual has a general ability to use English effectively to meet most routine social and work situations; can interpret routine charts, graphs and tables and complete forms; has high ability to communicate on the telephone and understand radio and television; can meet work demands that require reading and writing and can interact with the public. The individual can use common software and learn new applications; can define the purpose of software and select new applications appropriately; can instruct others in use of software and technology.

Sources for “Outcome Measures Definitions Chart”: “Measures and Methods for the National Reporting System for Adult Education,” NRS Implementation Guidelines, June 2000; for Work Keys, correspondence from ACT; information provided by Michigan adult educators for the SLOSSON and BESTEL assessments.